

The RN School Nurse as Consultant

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Objectives

1. Describe the basis for school nurse consultation practice within the regulated scope of nursing: consensus statements, state regulations, and professional literature.
2. Explore topics related to the consultation role in school nurse practice: theoretical models, purpose and goals, quality assurance, liability issues and ethical dilemmas in consultation practice.

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The Unique Role of the RN School Nurse

- RN Nurse-driven
- Medically current and clinically demanding
- Individual-level direct care *and* population-based
- Delivered in absence of parent yet family-centered
- *Highly* collaborative: multidisciplinary practice in a non-health environment
- Influenced by workplace agreements, local school policy, state statute and regulation, and federal law.

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Actually, it's *Roles*

- **Multiple roles of the RN School Nurse**
 - Indirect as well as direct provision of nursing care
 - Leadership role expressed as consultant, supervisor, content expert/educator, facilitator
 - Unique strength linking community resources to the school
 - Considerable time, effort, and expertise dedicated to planning.

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ANA and NASN. School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice. American Nurses Association: Silver Spring MD. 2005.

■ STANDARD 5c: CONSULTATION

- **The School Nurse provides consultation to influence the identified plan, enhance the abilities of others, and effect change.**
- 3 Measurement Criteria

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*ANA and NASN. School Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice. American Nurses Association: Silver Spring MD. 2005. (*Italics emphasis by KK.*)*

MEASUREMENT CRITERIA

- Synthesizes data, information, theoretical frameworks, and evidence when providing consultation.
- Facilitates the effectiveness of a consultation by involving the stakeholders in the decision-making process.
- Communicates consultation recommendations that influence the identified plan, facilitate understanding by involved stakeholders, enhance the work of others, and effect change.

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http://www.sos.ne.gov/rules-and-regs/regsearch/Rules/Health_and_Human_Services_System/Title-172/Chapter-99.pdf

- Title 172 Nebraska Administrative Code Chapter 99
- 99-001 Scope and Authority (*excerpt*)
 - Licensed nurses provide nursing care through a variety of roles including: a) the direct provision of care, b) the indirect provision of care through administering, managing, and supervising the practice of nursing, c) the teaching of health care practice to individual, families, and group, and d) collaboration and consultation with other health professionals in the management of health care.

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What's in Your Job Description?

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Stanhope M and J Lancaster. Public health nursing: population-centered health care in the community, 7th ed. Mosby-Elsevier: St. Louis. 2008. pp. 941-946

- Content models of consultation
 - Purchase-of-expertise consultation
 - Physician-client model
- Process models of consultation
 - Provide the client with the basis for decision-making
 - Follows the nursing process:
 - Form a relationship to assess the problem
 - Planning and implementing actions
 - Evaluating the outcomes of interventions
 - Interventions may occur as direct care or as a consultant
 - The student/patient is the focus/object of care.

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Wilson, D. (2008) Multiple relationships in nursing consultation. Nursing Forum 43(2): 63-71.

“Nursing consultation occurs when a nurse works with an individual, group, organization, or community with the specific purpose of assisting them to solve actual or potential problems related to the health status of patients or to the healthcare organization.”

“Nursing consultation focuses on problem-solving with the ultimate goal of effective patient care and improved patient outcomes.”

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Wilson, D. (2008) Multiple relationships in nursing consultation. Nursing Forum 43(2): 63-71.

Nursing consultation is an indirect nursing intervention: “a nursing activity that is performed away from the patient but on behalf of a patient or group of patients...aimed at management of the care environment and interdisciplinary collaboration.”

Registered nurses who engage in consultation practice integrate aspects of the nursing process, adopt multiple nursing roles, and borrow from consultation as practiced by other helping professions.

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3 Nursing Functions: Consultation, Delegation, and Supervision

- **Consultation** = providing information and guidance for use in problem-solving to improve care.
- **Delegation** = the transference from one individual to another the authority, responsibility, and accountability to perform nursing interventions.
- **Supervision** = the provision of oversight and includes retaining accountability for determining whether or not nursing care is adequate and delivered appropriately.

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Case Study #1

- The paraplegic student who required assistance with position changes throughout the day to reduce the risk of pressure sores.

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Case Study #2

- The student who required building modifications related to severe allergies.

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Case Study #3

- The very young, medically-fragile child entering school for the first time.

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Case Study #4

- The building with an evacuation strategy requiring staff to carry wheelchairs down a flight of stairs.

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What is your professional liability as a consultant?

- Is consultation, or planning, within your job description?
- The consultative role between school nurse and school administrator is voluntary.
- You are accountable "as a reasonable nurse" for the information you provide, and the process through which you developed your recommendations.
- The direct responsibility for patient care always lies with the consultee.

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Assuring quality in your practice role as Consultant

1. Always study
2. Rigorously apply the nursing process
3. Be knowledgeable about applicable laws, statutes, regulations, and policies
4. Ground your information and resources in evidence-based, theoretically-sound, best practice
5. Acknowledge and be true to your professional values: family-centered care, cultural frameworks, age-appropriate, respect for individual rights
6. Give some thought to your documentation practices: communicate professionally, consistently, cite important sources.

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“Effective nursing consultation requires expert knowledge, a broad skill base, and professionalism.”

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Ethical dilemmas posed by multiple roles

- Nurse consultant/clinician
- Nurse consultant/supervisor
- Nurse consultant/personal relationships
- “Over-involved and over-invested.”

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Where multiple roles cannot be avoided (Wilson)

- When multiple roles cannot be avoided, appropriate precautions include informed consent, consultation, supervision, and documentation to assure judgment is not impaired.
- Assess the situation for risk of loss of objectivity, or creating exploitation or harm.
- Acknowledge and remain vigilant.
- “Ultimately, it is the nurse consultant's responsibility to safeguard the credibility of the nurse consultation process.”

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THANK YOU!

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